

Horicon Marsh Water Levels

As in the past, the US Fish and Wildlife Service along with the WI DNR got together and coordinated annual water level management plans for Horicon Marsh this past winter. Aside from impoundments along the borders of the marsh (which have little effect on the main body of the marsh) this year's plan was to keep average levels of water in the marsh. To that end, water level monitoring and dam level adjustments were made throughout the summer to maintain water levels as best possible.

Since the end of June, the WI DNR dam in the city of Horicon has been closed with only some flow going over the fixed spillways and a small flow going under one of the moveable gates. The US Fish and Wildlife Service has continually passed water to the state end of the marsh throughout the summer.

Current low water levels are due to the lack of rain in the upper Rock River watershed. It is not uncommon to have water levels drop toward the end of summer. This is due to the uptake of water by actively growing vegetation and evaporation during the warm weather. Water level recovery generally happens as vegetation stops growing, cooler temperatures and higher humidity help keep water in the system.

Water level management is a year-round activity and with a river system, there are limits as to what can be controlled even with dams.